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The British Empire.

A SPEECH

Delivered at the Banquet in Boston.

.....CELEBRATING.....

Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee

.....BY.....

Nicholas Flood Davin, Q.C., M.P.

WINNIPEG :
NOR'-WESTER OFFICE,

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THE EMPIRE AND THE COLONIES.

THE GREATNESS AND GLORY OF THE EMPIRE—GROWTH OF
THE COLONIES—THE COLONIES, THE EMPIRE—CAN-
ADA'S WONDERFUL PROGRESS—IMPREGNABILITY AND
FUTURE OF THE EMPIRE—JUBILEE SPEECH AT BOS-
TON, U. S. A., By

NICHOLAS FLOOD DAVIN, Q. C., M. P.

There are 40,000 Britishers, who are British in sympathy in Boston; some Englishmen, Irishmen and Scotchmen; but by far the largest portion coming from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. Early in the year, the leading men of the 40,000 formed themselves into the Victorian Diamond Jubilee Festival Association, Mr. Thos T. Stokes being secretary, and the result was that on the 21st of June there was held in Boston such a festival as was never seen before in a foreign city. During the day there was an imposing procession, made up of those of the 40,000 who wished to march, of a large number of pensioners wearing clasps and medals headed by John Gillon, the sole survivor of Waterloo, carrying a banner on which was inscribed "Waterloo, 1815;" of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company who wished to join the procession to show their appreciation of the way they had been received in England and Canada; of marines and blue jackets from Her Majesty's ship "Pallas," which had come from Halifax to take part in the celebration; of

members of the Caledonian Society in the Scotch national dress headed by a piper; and of carriages of distinguished people. This procession, which excited great enthusiasm among the British onlookers, was followed in the evening by a banquet. The Boston Herald next morning said: "A magnificent and distinguished gathering voiced last night in Mechanics building the tribute alike of Boston and Massachusetts to the great and good woman who for the past sixty years has ruled over the people of Great Britain. The assembly had all the prestige of unprecedented numbers. The festival brought upwards of 2,600 persons to the tables in the great banquet hall and made a spectacle when the proceedings were at their height of a character very remarkable and impressive." From 6 o'clock until ten minutes to 7 in one of the large rooms adjoining the hall, Mr. Davin, who had come from Ottawa to reply to the toast of the Empire and the Colonies, and Mrs. Davin, held a levee, and the ladies and gentlemen hailing from Canada were entering the dining room presented to them. The great galleries around the hall were filled and thousands looked down on a

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scene of splendor and decorations it would be impossible to describe. "The human interest of the occasion," adds the Boston Herald, "dominated its every other aspect. To see two thousand six hundred people at dinner was a sight in itself." As a fact, 2,700 people sat down to dinner. The banquet was presided over by Mr. George B. Perry, the president of the Victoria Diamond Jubilee Festival Association, to his right and left being His Excellency Roger Wolcott, Governor of Massachusetts, Sir Dominie E. Colnaghi, consul general of Boston, Nicholas Flood Davin, Q. C., M. P.; Vice Consul W. H. Stuart, His Honor Mayor Quincy, the Hon. Winslow Warren, the collector of the port of Boston; Captain Humpage, of Her Majesty's ship Pallas, and a number of distinguished persons, military and clerical. Among the ladies were Lady Colnaghi, Mrs. Wilcock, Mrs. Davin, Mrs. J. T. Baker, etc.

The usual toasts, the "President," the "Queen," the "Commonwealth," and the "Army and Navy" having been duly honored Gen. Curtis Guild, the toast master, proposed "The Empire and the Colonies," coupled with the name of Nicholas Flood Davin, who represented Canada (cheers.)

Mr. Davin—Your Excellency, Mr. President. Ladies and Gentlemen—On behalf of Canada which the Diamond Jubilee Festival Association has done me the honor to ask me to represent and on behalf of the Empire and the Colonies for which I speak, I thank you for this reception. I hope I shall be excused a little criticism of the toast to which I have the honor to respond—"the Empire and the Colonies"—Why, the colonies are the Empire. (Cheers) As a colonist, as a Canadian, having met this afternoon many of those who are now seated down those long and numerous tables, and learned how deep their interest is in the great premier colony, the great Confederation whence I come, as an Imperial Federationist

I am forward to assert that the colonies are the empire and that it is by colonists that Empire has been built up. (Renewed cheering). It will be obvious that whatever time, relying on your forbearance, I may presume to take, yet having regard to the subject, my speech will be brief; that therefore my mood must be one of appreciation not criticism—nay, must it not be one of enthusiasm? Nay, more, could any man realizing truthfully the facts of the present and the past, let him be in what critical mood he might or will, feel other than enthusiastic? The critic and the historian, indeed, when he comes to deal with the sixty years whose teeming incidents our minds survey will have qualifications and reservations to make, which, even if present to us, it would be improper here and now to obtrude. Nobody need suppose that I hold that all things which should have been done, have been done, or that some things which have been done would have been better not left undone. I do not therefore invite your attention to an historical disquisition. I ask your attention while in a few words I touch on what is true and vital and unquestionable in the light of this epic moment which challenges not our attention merely but the attention of civilized mankind. (Cheers.) I know that in Boston, as all over the United States, there are British born subjects who stand aside from the British empire, but they have no logical or historical ground for this, because the Empire which as an actuality is of comparatively recent date has been built up by and is composed of Irishmen as well as Englishmen and Scotchmen—all three have fought and thought and bled the world over in extending and building and blending—weaving the wonderful web—raising that wonderful thing—without prototype or parallel—the British Empire. (Cheers.)

But, Sir, there are thronging memories which point to beckoning associations and thrilling suggestions. From this great theme of Empire I must for one moment turn aside.

Standing here for the first time on this classic ground, in the Athens of

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the New World, common gratitude makes it impossible I should forbear to do homage to those great men who the other day moved among you, whose inspiration was essentially British, who were among those who gave my young mind its earliest and noblest stimulus—Emerson, Holmes, Longfellow, Lowell. (Cheers.) These are names which must not pass away. This great nation is justly proud of its democracy. Happy is the democracy which has an aristocracy of genius and knowledge, and happy is the city which can boast of giving humanity names like these. (Cheers.) Turning away from them and other great intellectual benefactors, which irresistibly present themselves, how striking—how illustrative of the humanizing influence of time the healer as well as avenger—that we should be assembled here under present conditions* for I am not quite as oblivious of the past as that English nobleman, who on approaching Boston and having Bunker Hill pointed out to him asked "Who was Bunker? and what did he do with his hill?" (Laughter.) Why, it requires only a small effort of the imagination to hear the first murmurs of the war of independence, the guns of Concord, the shouts of citizens rising against taxed tea; the cries of the embattled farmers who fired the shot heard round the world; and yet we are met in one of the foremost cities of the great republic which emerged full panoplied from the smoke and blood of a rebellion commenced thus and here—to do what? To honor the Diamond jubilee of the world Empire British Queen; and the grandsons of the hero-farmers join with us in drinking the health of the granddaughter of George III. (Cheers.)

This is a magnificent festival; but, contrary to rule, it is greater relatively than absolutely. Grand as it is, its grandeur is enhanced when we think that at this moment, not merely in London is the Empire Queen gathering her children around her, but that, in great cities and capitals under the southern cross, under northern auroral lights, torrid suns, within British limits, or in foreign lands wherever British energy has gone—or in a land like this which no British heart can heartily call for-

eign—for what is this great republic but one of the lion's whelps grown to lionhood, and for distinction sake growing a pair of wings and proclaiming himself a lion of the air—(Laughter and cheers)—everywhere in the civilized world, nay in its uncivilized corners also: wherever British pluck and endurance are found—and where are they not?—the same feast is held—in city and jungle, or mountain and plain, there is no clime so inhospitable there is no tract so dangerous, no isle so little, no sea so lone, but over tower and turret and dome, over scud and sand and palm tree, at this hour, the flag bearing the three crosses of the three great nations of the two heroic isles, rises with solemn splendour and sublime significance; where it is day the winds of heaven reverently caress its immortal folds, and where it is night the stars salute it as a fellow star. (Applause.)

The majority of the great empire or power displays of the past had no moral or spiritual significance. The most suggestive is that of Alexander with kings and satrapies bowing to Greek genius and generals from whose loins great dynasties were to spring waiting on the son of Philip. Alexander's was a military despotism, but his conquests carried the Greek language and Greek literature to the East; and although Greek civilization rested on a base of slavery it had yet for its central idea the importance of the individual and of individual culture. Still neither in power or splendour or in relation to the progress and happiness of mankind do the claims of Alexander on our interest approach what is taking place today.

Talk of Rome in her palmiest days, when the republic had reached its apex, when the car climbed the capitol, leading captive kings and princes from Syria; crowned chiefs of transmontine tribes, the fair haired Dacian, the turbaned priest from Egypt, the blue-eyed Gaul, followed the cortege of boastful conquest; when the wealth of the Ganges and the Euphrates, of the Nile and Persian seas, of the Loire and the Rhine, were poured into the lap of the Tiber; when the column rose wound round with tales of success in war; when laurelled conquerors triumphed over pontiff kings; when power

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and fear drew the leaders of a hundred tongues to the mistress of mankind and bent their necks in servile obeisance. A greater—a more gorgeous—above all, a nobler spectacle claims our attention on the banks of the Thames than ever dazzled the Euphrates or the Tiber. We have in London today the rulers of free communities, of nascent nations, wherein education is diffused among the poorest, where no slave can breathe, proffering proud voluntary allegiance, the rulers of free peoples, whose meanest citizen feels that he is the fractional part of a sovereign; representatives of colonial governments; representatives of colonial armies, militia, volunteers; swarthy princes and rajahs from India's three hundred millions, pleiaded with diamonds and belted like Orion; dusky warriors from Guinea; the dyak from Borneo; the Maori from New Zealand; all the jewelled pomp and splendour of the East, all the enlightenment of the West; India, Africa, Australasia, Canada, the islands of the sea spontaneously met in grateful tribute and willing homage. (Loud cheers.)

Never has there been a pageant so supremely moral, so superb in power and at the same time in intellectual, moral and spiritual interest—so inspiring with the loftiest hopes for human destiny. No department of state, no function of peace, no arm of war, no dependency is unrepresented in that imposing throng swelled by princes and ambassadors from empires and kingdoms and republics. Mr. Whitelaw Reid, the special ambassador of this republic, great fabricant of diurnal democratic thunder, bears aloft the stars and stripes of this great free nation, side by side with the insignia of the Czar, and the flag of Switzerland gleams near the eagle of France.

All the genius and power and glory of the empire converges in the imperial city, where the Abbey of Edward the Confessor consecrates the dust of men whose names are filed on fame's eternal head roll, where the mighty dome of St. Paul's canopies all that is mortal of the heroes of Trafalgar and Waterloo. This pageant more splendid in its moral aspect than in those of wealth or pomp, or dominion, or power is held un-

der the overwhelming splendour of memories in which saints and sages, warriors and kings and poets and statesmen loom large and luminous; the great ancestors and forerunners of the Queen, the Edwards and Henrys; mailed barons and armed crusaders; Shakespeare and his brethren; Chaucer and Milton; Marlborough and Sidney; Clarendon and Burke; Chatham and his greater son—an army of immortals rise from their tombs to salute this day; the cope of the crowning cycle; the fruit of centuries of great thought and sage deed, of patience and valor and will, of heroic life and heroic death. The English Harold smiles from remote centuries on the latest, greatest and most fortunate of English rulers, and the British Arthur, the purpose of whose life a frail queen and erring woman spoiled, sees that purpose fulfilled beyond his fondest dreams by a blameless woman and a British queen; and Victoria stainless, dutiful, realizes the ideal shattered by the beautiful and passionate Guinevere. (Loud and prolonged cheers.) And while all this is taking pace in London and echoed in ten thousand centers of free life—echoed in Melbourne, in Winnipeg, in Calcutta, Vancouver; in Cape Town and Halifax, and here in this great city of another country, though not another race, look seaward! Around Spithead there moves a fleet of warships. Sea dragons—Argosies of steel clad terror—a spectacle such as the world never saw before—and this practically only the Channel fleet. I need not tell an enlightened audience like this what has been the amazing growth of the British empire in the past sixty years. A few days ago the New York Tribune in an article did justice to "the British Golden Age," and pointed out that while other reigns had been more sensational, none had been so truly glorious, none had been so great progress in the expansion of the empire, in political development, in the industrial, social, intellectual and spiritual advancement of the people; the bounds of freedom have been enlarged. In every field of science and every walk of art renowns have

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outdazzled each other. I have dwelt on the significance of this magnificent demonstration in this great city, but not less significant is it that one of the foremost papers of this Republic which is England's grandest child, should point the finger of eulogy at the wonderful expansion of the empire in these sixty years. That expansion is not the expansion of a conqueror. It is due to the trading adventurous instincts of the British race and if the British soldier has followed the trader it has been to protect him and help to spread freedom and enlightenment.

What is the priceless thing—the great jewel held in the mighty casket of the British empire? Only in that empire today, certainly outside the United States, is the idea of individual liberty and of equal justice between man and man understood. And as surely as England when Napoleon menaced the world was the asylum of liberty and the successful protagonist of freedom so surely does the British Empire today carry in its mighty bosom all the best hopes of the human race. That empire is greater morally than physically; its moral greatness surpasses its extent and power; it is not because it is worldwide; not because the sun never goes down on its flag; not because its martial airs, as your own Webster said, keep time with the hours, that we love and honor it; but because no tyrant can live within earshot of its drum, no slave breathe with that "blooming old rag overhead." (Cheers.)

Greece taught the world individual culture, aesthetic self respect; to England alone we owe the more valuable lesson that individual liberty stands pre-eminent in value, above all else.

Canada illustrates in a special manner this broad beneficent policy and the progress of the empire—a progress which suggests an expansion and greatness which will yet dwarf what we witness today. Last Sunday's Herald, one of your papers in the city, having pointed out, aided by an excellent map, how during the Queen's reign at least three-fourths of India had been acquired; to the acquisition of Fiji; parts of Borneo, Guinea and Hong Kong; to the acquisition of vast terri-

tories in Africa; to the emergence of Australia, New Zealand, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, said, adopting the language of the New York Tribune, that "the development of the Dominion of Canada has been almost equal to the discovery of a new continent." Sixty years ago the total population of the empire was 127 1-2 millions. Today it is more than treble that, being 333 1-2 millions, or more than one-fifth of that of the whole world. Its area is now 11,334,391 square miles, three times the area of Europe, one-fifth of the area of the globe; and of this area Canada furnishes 3,457,000 square miles—something less than one-third of the whole. Canada is not merely a colony, it is a confederation of colonies, and during the reign has marched forward with the rhythm and sequence of a great drama. When her Majesty ascended the throne, the fire and smoke of rebellion blazed and blurred over the banks of the St. Lawrence and along the north of Lake Ontario. Everywhere the people were oppressed. But as a result of the rebellion Quebec and Ontario were united and received responsible government in 1841. Meantime in the Maritime provinces a similar constitutional struggle was going forward led in Nova Scotia by Joseph Howe (loud cheers) whose genius having achieved responsible government he became the first premier. By and by a movement for confederation arose and in Ontario two great men, rivals but patriots, came to the front, Sir John Macdonald and George Brown; in Quebec Sir George Cartier, who had been a rebel in 1837; in New Brunswick Sir Leonard Tilley (cheers); in Nova Scotia Charles Tupper (loud cheers)—the present Sir Charles, whose indomitable will carried his Province into confederation, which became an accomplished fact, the same year in which Disraeli passed his reform bill, which for the first time put power into the hands of the masses of the United Kingdom. Meanwhile we had entered into a reciprocity treaty in 1854 with the United States and in 1856 had completed the building of the Grand Trunk railway. The Provinces confederated, we proceeded to acquire the Northwest; Manitoba, British Columbia and

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Prince Edward Island were added to the confederation and in 1885 at a cost of 150 millions we spanned the continent with a railway from the stormy Atlantic to the Pacific. Let me beg your attention for one moment while in a sentence or two I give you some idea of this great confederation of colonies which I have the honor to represent here tonight.

In 1837 there were no ocean steamers plying between Great Britain and this continent. An occasional steamer found its way into New York there to be gazed at by wondering thousands as in the case of the "Great Western" which arrived in New York on the 23rd of April, 1838, to be detained several hours because the steward could not procure provisions enough in all New York, and she had to wait for a delayed boat load of them. But in 1897 fourteen distinct Canadian lines of steamship cross the Atlantic to and from the St. Lawrence, and I have just come from Ottawa where last week in the parliament of Canada we voted \$500,000 a year to a fleet of grey hounds to make the trip at the rate of twenty-one knots an hour.

Look at our shipping! In 1837 the Montreal shipping arrived, consisted of 208 vessels, 50,277 tons register; in 1897 4,233 vessels, 2,156,859 tons register. In 1837 the total trade of Canada of the P. N. A. provinces, imports and exports, amounted to \$28,000,000; in 1897, \$240,000,000.

In 1837 the shipping employed inwards amounted to 1,840 vessels, 617,899 tons; in 1897, to 96,641 vessels of 25,268,536 tons.

Look again at railways. We had in 1837 16 miles of railway, 1 locomotive, 4 cars, 20,000 passengers, 7,716 tons of freight. Today, in 1897, we have 17,000 miles of railways, 2,046 locomotives, 62,000 cars, 14,810,407 passengers, 44,266,825 tons of freight. In 1837 we had 16 miles of canals five feet on sill. In this year of grace, 1897, we have 72 miles of canals from 9 to 14 feet on sill, with a submerged canal between Montreal and Quebec, made by cutting out about 25,000,000 cubic feet of earth and stone, the whole opening up a system of navigation over 2,000 miles in length at a cost of \$31,000,000. (Cheers). You

cheer that. But I have yet to tell you what is more significant as regards the empire. We have in the last twenty-five years opened up a country known as the Canada Northwest, which could supply England with all the beef, wheat, mutton, butter, pork and cheese she needs. With Canada not to speak of Australia and India, and the Cape, nobody need talk of starving Great Britain.

In 1891 we shipped eastward from Manitoba and the Northwest 17,000,000 bushels of grain; in 1892 20,000,000 bushels; 1893 17,000,000 bushels; 1894, 19,000,000 bushels; 1895, 22,000,000 bushels; in 1896, 26,000,000. We have on the Atlantic and the Pacific the finest harbors and the finest coal fields in the world. The finest coaling stations for an imperial fleet. We have silver and gold and nickel and mica mines. We have forests all but inexhaustible; rivers and lakes; fisheries the envy of the world, mountains which you who have crossed the Rockies know surpass those of Switzerland in sublimity and terrific grandeur. We have great cities on the Pacific coast, a city only ten years old, which might be a great capital. In Winnipeg the village of 1831 is a great city today, and along the line westward towns and cities most of which—I don't think you could say this of Boston—have plenty of light and yet have never had any gas (laughter and cheers.)

Now there are some papers which are hostile to this Great British empire. I don't know why, any more than I can understand an Irishman being hostile to it. I know very well there have been unwise English statesmen and bad laws, but the expansion of the British empire is the enlargement of the freedom and blessings and enlightenment of the human race. It is admitted that no two great powers combined could cope with England, but it is said all the powers might combine. Is that likely? But suppose they did. Remember Great Britain and Ireland faced a world in arms a century ago, and never sat down until Waterloo, one of whose heroes is at this board tonight, crowned her and placed the bloody laurels of victory

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round her brow. (Cheers.)

The Queen's reign has been compared to that of Louis XIV. But Louis XIV, old and wearied, went painfully to the tomb in the midst of reverses of fortune and overawed by a formidable coalition. Queen Victoria sees her immense empire increase every day and casting her eyes towards every compass and scanning the world's map she meets only with subjects to excite satisfaction and inspire hope. Louis XIV's system laid the foundation of the decadence of France, and led on by sure steps to Sedan. A comparison has been made with the Roman, but Roman power died in the extremities and the provinces in time had either to be abandoned or rose, subdued against subduer, and overwhelmed the centre from which heart and faith and valor had fled. Everything is different with the British empire. The heart is as sound as in days of yore, and for the extremities—the imperial offshoots—the nation colonies turn not to rend but to defend and strengthen. Under the Southern cross is an island a quarter the size of Europe with great and splendid cities which did not exist when Her Majesty ascended the throne. There is British Africa: there is the confederated half of this continent, whence I come—all saying to the ocean Queen, "our pride and glory is to serve under you and stand by your side." Macaulay, led away by a love for effect, pictured a traveller from New Zealand sitting on a broken arch of London bridge, sketching the ruins of St. Paul's, and the great Daniel Webster in one of his addresses reflected that if England should pass into decay the great Republic which was her child, born in storm and bitterness and fated to greatness, would preserve her memory, her arts, her language, her love of freedom. England's time cannot come unless her empire's time should come. Where is the nation, or combination of nations, which could meet this world

wide empire united to fight? Instead of the New Zealander sketching the ruins of St. Paul's we should have the Maori swelling the imperial army. The men living in the two heroic isles show no decay, and as for their colonial children and brethren our Toronto Highlanders beat the regulars the other day. In earlier hours of danger we sent the 100th regiment. We guided the Imperial troops up the Nile. Australia sent her sons to fight and has arranged for her own naval contingent. South Africa has followed suit. What I see is more and fuller life everywhere. It may be that we shall see despotism and tyranny and barbarism civilized only in the art of war, combined against this empire with its 50,000,000 of English-speaking men and millions of loyal subject races. It may be we may have to face an Armageddon in which the oceans and seas of the round world will be purple with blood and flame, and it may be, that is, it is not beyond the bounds of possibility—it may be we should succumb. If so we would to use language which my gallant friend and his marines and blue jackets will understand, we would fall as they fall and die as our fathers died with the jack still floating nailed to the mast, leaving a name without a parallel and which never could have a parallel. Much more likely we would send tyranny skulking to its hold cooped up in narrower bounds and make the three-crossed flag still more the world's flag of freedom. All the signs are signs of life; of expanding material, moral and spiritual power. This empire will go forward becoming greater in power and a still greater blessing to mankind. A federation of free nations. The centuries will make millenniums, and yet it is my belief and hope and fervent prayer that beauty's ensign will be purple on those imperial lips and the day beyond the forecast of man when death's pale flag will be advanced on that imperial brow. (Loud and prolonged cheers.)

